

**Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government**

**Hearing on Enhancing the Safety of Our Toys: Lead Paint, the Consumer Product  
Safety Commission, and Toy Safety Standards**

**Statement of Senator Bill Nelson**

**September 12, 2007**

Mr. Chairman, Members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to speak with you about efforts to improve the safety of imported toys.

As you are all aware, over the past few months the news has been filled with numerous reports of unsafe imported toys and consumer products.

From children's jewelry containing toxic levels of lead to toys with detachable magnets that can cause fatal intestinal obstructions, this country has literally been flooded by a sea of dangerous products.

Over the summer I was able to see some of the impacts of this first-hand.

In July, I visited with a team of emergency room doctors in Tampa who had treated children with intestinal obstructions due to magnets that had detached from toys.

In some cases, the doctors noted that the intestinal obstructions were so severe that the children had to undergo surgery to remove the obstructions.

Invasive surgery like this is scary for most adults . so you can probably only imagine what it is like for a 4 or 5-year old to have to go through something like this.

In August, I also visited with a family in Jacksonville who left two of their children in a room with a disco ball toy.

The disco ball toy later overheated, caught fire, and emitted enough carbon monoxide to kill both children.

Two young children are dead from playing with a seemingly innocuous toy.

These incidents just shouldn't be happening . and it's time to finally take action to protect our kids from toxic toys.

I'm encouraged by the early reaction from the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the toy industry to this problem.

I think everyone now realizes that we must move quickly to restore confidence that imported consumer products . and in particular toys . are safe.

The real question now is how we move to address this problem.

On Monday, we received a policy report from the Administration's Import Safety Working Group.

On Tuesday, the Consumer Product Safety Commission also announced a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chinese Government on toy safety.

I appreciate the work that was put into both of these endeavors.

However, I think now is the time to move beyond policy statements and aspirational goals . and pass real legislation to stop dangerous products before they get to the United States and into the hands of children.

That's why I have introduced S. 1833, the Children's Products Safety Act of 2007.

This legislation would require all toys and other products intended for children 5 years of age or under to be tested by a independent, third-party entity to ensure that they meet all applicable U.S. consumer products safety standards.

Products that pass testing would receive a certificate of compliance that they meet safety standards.

Products that fail would not, and would be prohibited from either importation or sale in the United States.

It's one thing for exporters to state that they are complying with our safety regulations.

What we need to do now is actually verify that they are complying.

This legislation will do just that.

Furthermore, we need to ensure that the Consumer Product Safety Commission has the funding and regulatory tools to identify new threats to children's safety.

That's why I am also proud to be an original co-sponsor of Senator Durbin's legislation, S. 1847, which will re-authorize and reinvigorate the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Taken together, these two pieces of legislation will help to restore consumer confidence in children's toys and other consumer products.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the coming weeks to advance these items as soon as possible.

